BODY SUPPORT FOR EXCERCISING AND STRETCHING

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The field of the invention is pads or supports primarily used for exercising, stretching and fitness.

[0002] Various exercises are performed on the floor. These exercises include crunches, sit-ups, leg lifts, hip rolls, as well as other pelvic, abdominal, and hip exercises. In addition, various exercises using weights, particularly dumbbells, are also performed while laying on the floor. These types of exercises include dumbbell extensions, presses, flies, curls, etc. Moreover, various stretching movements or other physical fitness activities are also frequently performed on the floor.

[0003] Various floor pads have been used, to provide a softer and generally more comfortable surface. Typically, such floor pads are flat slabs. While they may provide some degree of cushioning or comfort, they generally offier no body support or positioning during exercising or stretching.

[0004] For various reasons, many people cannot lay flat on the back to stretch or exercise. This may result due to back injuries, spinal or joint conditions, muscle conditions, recovery from surgical procedures, etc.

[0005] Accordingly, there is a need for an improved exercise support or pad that provides greater versatility, body positioning and comfort during stretching or exercising.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] A new body support has now been developed which greatly improves the user's ability to stretch or exercise. Ergonomic characteristics are significantly enhanced. In a first aspect, the present body support includes a wedge-shaped base. The base is preferably made of a first type of foam, such as open cell mattress foam. A head/neck pillow cushion is advantageously centrally located on top of the wedge-shaped base. The head/neck pillow is preferably made of a second foam, such as memory foam, which is softer than the wedge-shaped base.

[0007] In a second aspect, the support preferably has a handle and/or a pocket attached to a cover extending around the wedge-shaped base. The support is designed to elevate the user's head, shoulders, and upper torso,

into a comfortable position for stretching or exercising. In general, the wedge-shaped base is dimensioned so that its front or top surface extends upwardly at an angle ranging from 25-50 degrees. Accordingly, in use, the user's upper torso is placed into a corresponding angle (i.e., 25-50 degrees) relative to the user's hips and/or legs. Supports with different inclination angles may be used for different applications.

[0008] Other and further objects and advantages will appear below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] In the drawings, wherein the same element number indicates the same element throughout each of the views:

[0010] Fig. 1 is a perspective view showing the body support n use.

[0011] Fig. 2 is a front elevation view of the body support shown in Fig. 1.

[0012] Fig. 3 is a rear elevation view of the body support shown in Figs. 1 and 2.

[0013] Fig. 4 is a right side elevation view thereof.

[0014] Fig. 5 is a left side elevation view thereof.

[0015] Fig. 6 is a top or plan view thereof.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0016] Turning now to the drawings, as shown in Figs. 2-6, the present pad, cushion, or body support 10 includes a top or front surface 12 inclined at an angle AA relative to the bottom or base 13. The angle AA is preferably 25-55 degrees, more preferably 30-45 degrees, or 35-40 degrees. As shown in Fig. 2, the pad 10 includes a wedge-shaped base 11, preferably formed by a foam wedge 26 and covered with a fabric or Nylon cover 20. The foam wedge 26 is preferably an open cell mattress foam. A handle 16 and a pocket 32 may optionally be stitched onto or otherwise attached onto the cover 20. The cover 20 is advantageously provided with first and second zippers 22 and 24, to facilitate manufacture, and to allow the cover 20 to be separated from the wedge 26, for cleaning.

[0017] A head/neck section or pillow 14 is centrally positioned on the wedge 26. As shown in Figs. 4 and 5, the head/neck pillow advantageously is positioned over the peak or high point 36 of the wedge 26, and extends from the front or top surface 12 over and around to a back surface 18 of the wedge

26. The head/neck pillow 14 is advantageously made of memory foam, i.e., a foam softer than the foam used to form the wedge 26. A thin preferably partially elastic cover 30 is provided over the head/neck section or pillow 14. The cover 30 is preferably partially stretched over the head/neck pillow 14, and fits tightly around the head/neck pillow 14. The cover 30 is preferably made of an elastic or stretchable material, such as Lycra.

[0018] Fig. 1 shows the pad or support 10 in use. The user's head rests on the head/neck pillow 14, with the user's shoulders and upper torso supported on the front or top surface 12. In this position, various exercises can be performed, such as crunches, bicycles, lower abdominal exercises, oblique muscle exercises, pelvic lifts or tilts. Upper body exercises, typically using weights or dumbbells may also be performed, including chest presses, chest flies, front dumbbell raises, pullovers, tricep extensions, rotator cuff exercises, curls, etc.

[0019] Various stretching exercises may also be performed. These include side-to-side neck stretches, shoulder stretches (trapezius, scapula, and deltoid muscles). Using a stretching band or belt, hamstring, calf, glut, and thigh stretches may also be performed.

[0020] While primarily intended for stretching and exercising, the present pad or support 10 can also be used for other activities, such as reading, watching TV, writing, working on a laptop computer, playing video games, or simply resting in an inclined position. The pad or support 10 may also be used for massage or reflexology.

[0021] Referring to Fig. 5, the base 26 has a length L preferably ranging from 18-36 inches or 20-32 inches. The height H of the base 26 is determined by the inclination angle AA, and typically H = 0.4-0.6 L. The height P of the head/neck pillow 14 is preferably 3-5 inches. Referring to Fig. 6, the head/neck pillow 14 is centrally located on the top 12 and back 18 surfaces of the wedge 26. The width PW of the head/neck pillow 14 preferably ranges from 0.5-0.8 of the width W of the wedge base 26, as shown in Fig. 3. The length PL of the head/neck pillow 14 as shown in Fig. 6 is preferably 0.4-0.7 PW. The bottom surface of the support 10 is preferably flat. Rubber or other high friction pads, tape, feet or projections 40 may be provided on the bottom, to reduce sliding of the support 10 when using on low friction floor surface, such as polished wood or stone.

[0022] Thus a novel body support has been shown and described. Various changes and uses of equivalents may of course be made, without

departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. The invention, therefore, should not be limited, except to the following claims and their equivalents.